



# ANALYZE THIS

An In-Depth Look At Handwriting By  
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"But, I don't write. I print."

Essentially, the same principles apply to the analysis of both printing and cursive writing. In both, the analyst evaluates pressure, speed, slant, size, page layout, originality and individual letter formations, all of which are considered together in reaching the final analysis.

There are some special considerations, however. For example, block printing does not permit the use of upper or lower loops. And printing, by its very nature, eliminates connections between letters, which can be important clues about how we relate to others and our environment.

Most printers say they do so because their cursive writing is illegible. Some, like architects, accountants and engineers, use printing professionally. Others claim that printing is faster than script, although this is a misconception as each lift of the writing instrument takes longer to accomplish than does a continuous connection to the next letter.

Generally speaking, printing reflects objectivity and emotional control. Printers are interested in facts, figures and the known. They tend to like regularity and structure in their lives, according to the degree of consistency of their letter formations, spacing and alignment. Printing adds to organized thought, but detracts from spontaneity.

Block printing, devoid of either upper or lower extenders, shows strong independence and an urge to be in control of oneself and the immediate environment. There can be a general lack of cooperation and a desire to follow one's own chosen path. Such writers are usually self-sufficient and may have some difficulty making emotional connections with others.

## BLOCK PRINT

Aesthetic printing, like that of author William Faulkner and inventor Thomas Edison, reflects concern about formality and appearances. If highly structured, pretense and rigidity are likely. Harmony and consistency are important, but quick responses and emotional expressions are uncommon.

pavilion where a young man, surrounded by slaves, lies sleeping,

William Faulkner

Thomas Edison

Unstructured printing with variable letter forms suggests inconsistent emotions and uncertain thought processes. Indecision, spontaneity and unexpected responses may be indicated. In this case depression is also shown in the falling lines.

Angular printing shows analytical thinking, fact-orientation and a tendency toward decisiveness and/or stubbornness. More rounded formations point toward unquestioning acceptance of information as well as compliance and a desire to please.

Right-slanted printing reveals emotional responsiveness (especially if accompanied by firm pressure), while upright printing reveals a cool, objective nature and a tendency to withhold emotional expression.

Writing that is primarily disconnected should not be confused with printing. The frequent breaks between letters of cursive script are indicative of intuition, an ability to sense the outcome of situations ahead of time.

When did you abandon cursive and start printing? This likely marked an important turning point in your life, perhaps a shift from emotional response to a more controlled, self-regulated stance. It may relate to having taken a stand in your life and realizing your own independence.

Reed is a certified handwriting and document examiner and author of "Between the Lines: Understanding Yourself and Others Through Handwriting" (Destiny Books, 1993). Your questions and comments are welcome. Write or call Reed for information on private consultations:

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